

## REFLECTIONS

Continued from page 10

**C**atholic identity compels organizations to act as an agent of change.

- **Coministering with employees.**

This commitment encompasses helping employees to realize their full potential; ensuring that all employees, Catholic and non-Catholic, understand and live out values flowing from the Catholic tradition; and treating employees justly.

- **Challenging and transforming.**

Catholic identity compels organizations, by their example and their willingness to take risks, to act as an agent of change in society and within the ministry.

- **Collaborating.** Recognizing that they cannot effectively accomplish all they want without others, Catholic organizations seek partners who share their values. In new relationships, they challenge others to take on new responsibilities.

- **Serving as stewards.** Catholic institutions acknowledge they are accountable to others for how they use their resources and they make ethical decisions regarding how resources are deployed.

As I reflect on these core commitments, it seems to me that the Catholic health ministry has a unique opportunity to bring about transformation in society and in the delivery of health-care so that people's needs are better served. I hope these shared ideas can be a source of hope for those of us in the Catholic health ministry. If we can agree on the commitments that form the core of our identity, and apparently we do, we can create a strong, unified vision for the future—a vision of who we are and what we want to accomplish. □

# Putting Patients First RESPONSE

## How Do You Help Patients Feel Comfortable?

In the November-December issue of *Health Progress*, we asked you what your organization does to help patients and their families feel "at home" and comfortable during their hospital experience. Here is a response we received. Answer this issue's question on p. 15, and we'll publish your answers.

### VCRS AND TEDDY BEARS

We do the following to help patients and their families feel "at home":

- A volunteer-run "room service" provides patients with daily papers, VCRs and videotapes, personal stereos, and other items to help make their stay a bit more relaxed.

- We allow family members to stay with the patient in the room, if possible and appropriate. We also provide reduced-fee lodging at "Providence Cottage" for families of open-heart surgery patients and others who travel long distances to be with patients who are seriously ill.

- Our pediatric unit welcomes each new patient and family with a special bear that is waiting on their bed or crib. This special friend accompanies our young patients while they are in the hospital, and

goes with them on their return home. The pediatric unit also has child-friendly murals and playrooms.

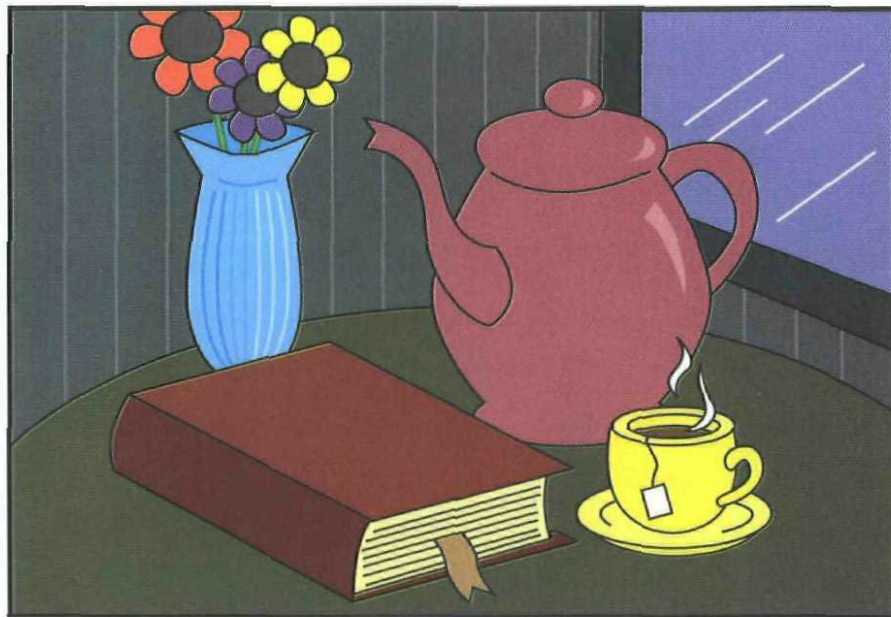
- Many wonderful volunteers escort patients and families to diagnostic areas. On patients' arrival, a volunteer in each waiting room offers free refreshments, a sympathetic ear, and an update on scheduling.

- We offer as many choices as possible to patients and their families so that, in a new environment, they have as many factors under their own control as possible.

- Our "take a minute" nursing program encourages our busy nursing professionals to take a moment to engage each patient and inquire, "How is it going?"

Larry Ehren

Director, Mission Integration  
Providence Health System  
Everett, WA



Illustrations by Lin Wilson